

New Delhi native creates brands built on sustainability and impeccable design



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Reach out, laugh and cry with your fellow entrepreneurs, and recommend them. It won't take away from your bottom-line, in fact, the goodwill will add to it in ways you never thought possible.

Itee Soni

Founder of sustainable gift brand The Nectar Foundry and co-founder of eco-swimwear brand Loop Swim

Yang Di

Since arriving in Shanghai in 2007, Itee Soni's entrepreneurial creativity has been unlocked. The New Delhi native is the founder of new sustainable gift brand, The Nectar Foundry, and the co-founder of one of the very first completely eco-swimwear brands, Loop Swim. While diverse in scope, both businesses are built on the same strong foundation of sustainability and an inimitable design aesthetic.

Q: Before we talk about Loop Swim and The Nectar Foundry your brands, would you please introduce yourself?

I arrived in Shanghai in 2007 from New Delhi, where I designed for UK high-street brands Karen Millen, Whistles, Ted Baker and Miss Selfridge. I am an honor graduate of India's premier design university, NIFT (National Institute of Fashion Technology) and I specialize in branding, womenswear, textiles, graphics, interiors and experiential design, aromatherapy and tarot.

Q: Why, after living in Shanghai for a few years, did you decide to strike out on your own to build up a brand?

By the time I met my business partner Heather Kaye in Shanghai, China, in 2008, we were both fed up with the unnecessary waste we saw being generated first-hand by the fashion industry.

Devoted women's apparel designers from New Delhi and New York City, we were (and are) passionate about fashion, and the intricate, human process of making clothing. After years behind the scenes at factories all around Asia, we

decided to start our own brand with the goal of upending the most unsustainable aspects of the fashion industry: fast fashion cycles, body negativity, throw-away quality, and environmentally damaging raw materials.

Together we built FINCH Designs (2010), a sustainable design and consulting company and its progression led to Loop Swim (www.loopswim.com, est. 2019), a brand that transforms post-consumer PET plastic bottles into phenomenal UPF50+ sun protective swimwear in funky and bold color combos for women, men and kids.

In September 2022, I launched my home and gift brand The Nectar Foundry. TNF offers gifts with intentions that foster meaningful connections and emotional wellbeing. Built around the principles of sustainability and mindfulness, it offers products and services — aromatherapy, wall art, cards, tea towels, tarot readings, that rejuvenate the soul, elevate our spatial experience, and help connect with the universal magic that surrounds us, with minimal impact on the environment.

Q: What makes Shanghai's business environment so remarkable?

Throughout my 16 years in this city, I have met incredible women so talented and driven that most charted their own paths different to what brought them here. The energy is infectious. Living in the historical downtown and being in the thick of this entrepreneurial melting pot, it is impossible not to catch the bug and really shoot for the moon. There's help, advice and collaboration at each corner.

I always say, Shanghai is not